

From: Alex Frieden <alex@frieden.org>
To: damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us, hmuise@verizon.net, bikeinfo@massbike.org
Date: 03/24/2021 10:25 AM
Subject: comments on appleton and mass ave

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Town of Arlington's email system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the REAL sender (whose email address in the From: line in "< >" brackets) and you know the content is safe.

Hi folks,

My name is Alex Frieden. I am a resident in Somerville and part of the Somerville Bicycle Committee. I do not represent them as part of this email but it is the background I am coming from. My wife, my two daughters, and myself come to Arlington regularly as we have friends there and often come by bike.

I was generally very happy to see the process that was taken here having representatives from all stakeholders with a variety of designs reviewed. Breaking apart the intersection and creating a one way out of appleton place makes the intersection operate much simpler.

However, there are real concerns over how things were presented: there was a traffic fatality there recently so all of us have blood on our hands to try to make sure such a horrible event doesn't happen again.

The priorities of the intersection were listed, but it wasn't clear what was being prioritized. Does parking need to take priority over safe travel? Are pedestrians crossing the street from the church the most important thing we want to fix? These help set the stage for how we think about possible solutions.

From the consultant, I saw some things that were red flags and some opportunities for an improved intersection:

- MBTA will be fine with buses operating at 10.5 feet. It's tight, but it is fine on straight aways. You don't need 11 foot lanes.
- On some of the consultant designs we saw 100% of space allocated to cars (two turning lanes, two standard lanes, two parking lanes). Is Arlington's desire to make sure alternative transportation modes are unused? If not, I think planners need to give better instructions to consultants.
- Instead of asking why take away parking, we should be asking why keep it. I saw a lot of concern around removing parking. In an age of extreme climate change, we should have to justify to ourselves the need to keep that valuable land for parking.
- I would encourage all to tighten the intersection. Wider turns slow vehicles down and gives all users time to see the situation and adapt accordingly.
- I would encourage future designs to use protected bike lanes and parking protected bike lanes to chicane the street with parked cars. It sounds like vehicles coming down the hill are a real threat for everyone.
- Make Appleton Place a one way contraflow street.

I am looking forward to seeing the next iteration of designs.

--
Alexander Frieden

From: Galen Mook <galen@massbike.org>
To: Daniel Amstutz <DAmstutz@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 04/01/2021 09:43 AM
Subject: Re: following up on HSIP funding to support dangerous intersection in Arlington

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Town of Arlington's email system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the REAL sender (whose email address in the From: line in "< >" brackets) and you know the content is safe.

Hi Dan,

I did hear back from DA Ryan's office, both the crashes for Charlie and the Chestnut St are still open, so they can't share. I did ask about the other crash at Appleton to see if there is a report, and will check back if I hear more.

For the analysis of the crash at Appleton, I'm concerned about the claim that solar glare was the cause of the crash for Charlie. His partner (who was also hit) maintains solar glare was not a problem for this incident, so I'm not sure where APD has the analysis that claims the sun was the problem. However, it also seems the best solution is to limit that movement from Mass Ave turning left onto Appleton, since that maneuver is the maneuver in both crashes, sun or no sun, which is why they had police detail out to prohibit that turn at certain times of day. I'd argue that instead of using APD resources, to simply prohibit the turn outright and see if that has an adverse impact on Mass Ave traffic flow and weigh that against the safety measures.

--
Galen Mook
Executive Director
Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition
Pronouns: he/him/his

[50 Milk Street](#)
[16th Floor](#)
[Boston, Mass. 02109](#)

www.MassBike.org
Office: 617.542.BIKE (2453)

On Tue, Mar 30, 2021 at 10:27 AM Daniel Amstutz <DAmstutz@town.arlington.ma.us> wrote:
Hi Galen

No, I haven't heard from Bonnie.

According to our police department I also can't get the crash report for the serious injury crash that happened at Mass Ave/Appleton a couple of weeks after the crash that killed Charlie Proctor. These also go to the DA's office and we don't have the staff certification necessary to do the investigation for this. From the APD point of view, however, the best solution for left turning traffic from Mass Ave to Appleton is going to be a full traffic signal or something that addresses the solar glare.

Thanks,

Daniel Amstutz, AICP
Senior Transportation Planner
Department of Planning & Community Development
Town of Arlington
730 Massachusetts Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476
(781) 316-3093

Arlington values equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are committed to building a community where everyone is heard, respected, and protected.

From: Galen Mook <galen@massbike.org>
To: Daniel Amstutz <DAmstutz@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: Tue, 30 Mar 2021 09:54:24 -0400
Subject: Re: following up on HSIP funding to support dangerous intersection in Arlington

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Town of Arlington's email system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the REAL sender (whose email address in the From: line in "< >" brackets) and you know the content is safe.

Hi Dan did Bonnie follow up here? I'm attending a training on the MassDOT crash portal on Thursday am so I can update after how that may help influence this project.

Also I heard from the DA's office they have the Chestnut St crash report and are reviewing before sending over, Charlie Proctor's is not available since it is still under investigation. I'll keep you posted when I know more.

-Galen

On Thu, Mar 25, 2021 at 4:21 PM Galen Mook <galen@massbike.org> wrote:

Hi Bonnie,

Thank you for your presentation at the MABPAB yesterday, I'm very encouraged by the way MassDOT is approaching HSIP and safety and risk holistically. One question came to a few of us who are working with the Town of Arlington to redesign a specific intersection on Mass Ave at Appleton Street which has seen a fatal bicycle crash last year, a serious bicycle crash shortly thereafter, and several car crashes, with a memo from CTPS dating back to 2012 about the danger of the intersection, and is currently under review by the Town with a public Design Review Committee for both short and long term design considerations.

To help see where HSIP may be able to help fund any longer term road redesign, I'd like to loop in Dan Amstutz from the Town of Arlington here, and to ask if you have a minute to help explain the HSIP process and where a municipal issue can be elevated to gain funding from high safety dollars.

Can we find a time to coordinate on a call, or maybe work via email to follow up?

--

Galen Mook
Executive Director
Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition
Pronouns: he/him/his

[50 Milk Street](#)
[16th Floor](#)
[Boston, Mass. 02109](#)

www.MassBike.org
Office: 617.542.BIKE (2453)

--

--

Galen Mook
Executive Director
Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition
Pronouns: he/him/his

[50 Milk Street](#)
[16th Floor](#)
[Boston, Mass. 02109](#)

www.MassBike.org
Office: 617.542.BIKE (2453)

From: Lynette Ingram Cassel <lynetteingram@gmail.com>
To: damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us
Date: 04/15/2021 10:09 AM
Subject: Comments re: Mass Ave/Appleton Design Review Committee meeting

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Town of Arlington's email system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the REAL sender (whose email address in the From: line in "< >" brackets) and you know the content is safe.

Hello Committee,

We have been the owners of 14-16 Appleton Place in Arlington for over 10 years. We are submitting my comments for your review for the 4/15/21 meeting which we are unable to attend. As a resident and owner very near this intersection, we are glad that the town is making safety improvements to this intersection as it is very hard to navigate safely.

We like the following 2 proposals best (Neighborways Design and Sofio design) because they bump out the curbs to provide better visibility for pedestrian traffic and clarify turn and bike lanes.

While changing Appleton Place to a one way street from Forest to Mass Ave is an interesting idea, *we would highly prefer that it be one way northbound. This would prevent turns from Mass Ave entirely and seems like the most clear solution.* This is a busy section of street between the middle school and Greek church bringing in a great deal of traffic collectively.

Thank you for considering our input in the design.

Lynette and James Cassel
14-16 Appleton Place

- [Short Term Improvements developed Neighborways Design](#)
- [Redesign concept developed by Petru Sofio](#)

From: <tt8343@aol.com>
To: damstutz@town.arlington.ma.us
Cc: tt8343@aol.com
Date: 04/15/2021 10:26 AM
Subject: Mass. Ave./Appleton St./Appleton Place

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Town of Arlington's email system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the REAL sender (whose email address in the From: line in "< >" brackets) and you know the content is safe.

Dan--I don't think I will be able to Zoom into the meeting tonight, but since I live on Burton Street here are some of my observations. First of all, it is virtually impossible to make a left turn out of Burton Street to head west on Mass. Ave. Visibility is not good due to the condo at 1180 Mass. Ave., bushes, etc. and eastbound traffic on Mass. Ave. approaches that intersection at a pretty high rate of speed. Plus there is an almost steady stream of traffic coming out of Forest Street heading east on Mass. Ave. This makes it almost mandatory to go west on Mass. Ave. by going up Burton Street to Appleton Place and entering Mass. Ave. at the intersection of Appleton Street, Appleton Place, and Mass. Ave. The problem there is that nobody coming down Appleton Street onto Mass. Ave., NOBODY, stops at the flashing red light located at that intersection. Plus the traffic going both east and west on Mass. Ave. is generally an unbroken line. It is a life-threatening experience to enter Mass. Ave. in a west-bound direction during the rush hour. Also, there is a bank directly across Mass. Ave. from Appleton Place and customers exit their parking lot going east on Mass. Ave. making the problem even worse.

Personally I think that the pedestrian light at Appleton St./Appleton Pl./ Mass. Ave. should be a permanent light with green arrows allowing Appleton Place traffic to safely enter Mass. Ave. in both directions. Seems to me that would be an inexpensive fix compared to all the other suggestions.

Tom Tierney, 15 Burton St.

From: Tycho Nightingale <tycho@pobox.com>
To: Jeff Maxtutis <jmaxtutis@beta-inc.com>, Daniel Amstutz <DAmstutz@town.arlington.ma.us>
Date: 04/15/2021 11:22 AM
Subject: Mass Ave/Appleton

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Town of Arlington's email system. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the REAL sender (whose email address in the From: line in "< >" brackets) and you know the content is safe.

Hi,

During the part of the meeting last night where we were discussing the Appleton Street intersection there was some bedtime drama in my house so I loosely followed the discussion but was unable to participate. And unfortunately I'm not able to attend tonight so I figured I'd convey some thoughts via email instead.

As the homeowner of 6 Appleton Place, which is not only between Burton Street and Mass. Ave., but looks directly upon the troubled intersection I have had plenty of opportunity to observe traffic flow on these streets and the circumstances leading up to the string of events last year.

Appleton Place is currently bidirectional with parking along the west side and very narrow sidewalk interrupted by utility poles on the east. It's a narrow street and there isn't enough room for cars to pass nor is there enough room for cars to easily maneuver out of driveways. An attempt to fix the driveway issue was made by the installation of signage prohibiting parking opposite driveways. Unfortunately the region impacted by the prohibition is unclear and folks often ignore the signs even the the parking lot a few spaces down is completely empty. Regardless, upon exiting a driveway this necessitates choosing a direction based on what's actually possible. Those are the current conditions which aren't quite ideal.

For the most part the concept designs share similarities but one component in particular strikes me as troublesome. In 3 of the designs it's proposed to make Appleton Place one way – 2 of them 'away' from Mass. Ave. and 1 'towards'. The concepts proposed by Green International neglect some key factors in making that suggestion. In the morning 'towards' is used as a component of the Ottoson drop-off loop for folks heading west. This is less than ideal but preferred to making a left out of Burton Street where the sight lines are even worse; trust me it can be nerve wracking making a left only to discover a bus bearing down on you and I can only imagine it will even worse if the traffic is forced to edge of the road and further obscured! Furthermore as it is today the Appleton Place direction conflict slows traffic. By making it one way 'away' there is nothing to curb the velocitizing that plagues drivers going up hill and these 2 designs legitimize hugging the left side of the road. On that side of the road poorly located utility poles force you into the street to continue up the sidewalk. Making Appleton Place one way maybe a decent option and in the Neighborways Design concept 'towards' at least has the advantage the drivers are slowing approaching Mass. Ave. in narrowest part of the street – that's a much better choice.

One other thing I noticed, that is not really treated by the any of the designs, is the west bound Mass. Ave. bus stop. That's popular way for Ottoson students to get to school

and the number of crossing they need to take on their journey should be minimized.

Hope this is some useful insight!

Tycho